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ABSTRACT

In the third year of Lincoln-Sudbury's Alternate Semester program, 22 students participated, with 2 teachers sharing responsibilities in a new program format: a fall planning unit; a 10-day stay in Grafton, Vermont; a 15-week period spent alone or in small groups, working and living in urban and/or rural settings for modules of time dictated by each students' needs and wishes; a final 2-week group project preparing an American summer camp for opening near Inverness, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Goals for the project remained basically the same: to foster responsibility, independence, awareness, and sensitivity. Rather than spend $350 per student for an Outward Bound course, the group elected to spend 10 days at Grafton, Vermont in a cabin built by the first Alternate Semester group. This report includes comments by the students on the urban and/or rural units, a student group evaluation of the advisors, an evaluation by a psychologist who was also a rural employer, and evaluations by the two advisors. One of the advisor evaluations describes nonparticipants (students in regular high school classes) as bored, restless, and motivated more by external pressures than by an interest in learning, while the Alternate Semester students "were excited by what they were learning...and beginning to find some direction for their lives." (AN)

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A REPORT ON ALTERNATE SEMESTER 1973-74

LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Sudbury, Massachusetts

RC 012563

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" Alternate Semester should be a known and famous part of the school - everyone should know all about it and be proud of it. "*

* A patriotic Alternate Semesterite

INTRODUCTION

Alternate Semester exists in order to present to the student an alternative to everyday high school experience. It is an ideal program for the motivated and the unmotivated, the academic and unacademic. It s philosophy does not suggest abolition of the present system, simply addition to it. Alternate Semester, not a fixed program, provides an atmosphere where experimentation is the norm...

Alternate Semester: Past and Present

1973-74 is the third year of the Lincoln-Sudbury Alternate Semester Program. Plans for the first program were made during the Spring of 1971 and the pilot program ran the second semester of the 1971-72 school year. Deemed successful, the program ran again last year, 1972-73. Each year has seen changes in the program and this year has been no exception.

First, in past years, Copley Square High School in Boston had sent students and a staff member to participate in the program which lent a happy urban-suburban mix right from the start and definitely helped the Lincoln-Sudbury students while in the city. This year because of funding and staffing cutbacks, Copley Square was unable to participate in the program.

Second, other Alternate Semester groups had traditionally begun the winter term with a three week Outward Bound course under the auspices of Hurricane Island Outward Bound School. This year it was felt that because of tighter budget restrictions placed upon the program, the $350 per student cost of the OB program was too high to justify. We instead elected to go to Grafton, Vermont for ten days as a group to a cabin which the first Alternate Semester group had built as a final project.

Third, rather than break the spring semester into a five week urban experience, a five week suburban experience and a five week rural experience, students were given the freedom to use the fifteen weeks as they saw fit. Thus, one student remained in Boston the entire time, another lived at home and worked in various suburban positions, three chose to do only rural units, while the remainder used varying modules of time to work in both urban

and rural settings (see the flow chart later in the Report for specifics).

Fourth, the leadership of the program was divided equally by two teachers this year, rather than have a single person in charge with a helper as in the past. Given the vast scope of responsibilities which fall to the leadership, this arrangement works extremely well and at no time hinders the decision-making process..

The 1973-74 group consisted of 22 students: 14 seniors, 6 juniors and two sophmores. Two faculty members were released 1/5 time during the fall and 2/5 time during the spring to guide the program. Students were granted 2 credits for participation in the fall planning course, and 12 credits for the off-campus spring semester. The latter were divided as follows: two in English, two in History, two in Physical Education, two in Science, two for an urban internship and two for a rural internship.

The goals for the program did not differ significantly from those of past years. They were specifically to foster the following:

(1) Responsibility - personal, group and budgetary

(2) Independence

(3) Awareness - of self, of others, of different lifestyles and environments

(4) Sensitivity to people and issues

The 1973-74 program format was as follows: a ten day stay in Grafton, Vermont as a group; a fifteen week period spent alone or in small groups, working and living in urban and rural settings for modules of time dictated by each students' needs and wishes; a final two week group project preparing an American summer camp for opening in Inverness, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

FALL UNIT

This unit consisted of two one hour meetings weekly. Throughout the fall semester the feeling was one of frustration, boredom, and apathy. There was little group identity, therefore minimal group participation. Most students felt sharp disappointment with the accomplishments of the fall semester.

However, along with this depression, we managed to hammer out the following itinerary, leaving thedetails to be arranged by the student:

Fall planning unit

10 day group project to Grafton, Vermont

Three five week units

Final project

10 Day Group Initiation Unit

Because finances and philos phies differed from previous years, we chose not to follow the recommendation that we participate in the Outward Bound program. Rather we hoped to achieve a group feeling through less expensive and arduous methods. We turned to Vermont for our setting. Its rural, naturally demanding environment and financial practicality gave us some of the good aspects of Outward Bound without the cost.

The Grafton, Vermont cabin is situated several miles in on old logging roads. It was built by the first Alternate Semester as a final work project. Constructed from recycled barn and bridge lumber, heated by wood-burning stoves, and surrounded by rivers and trails, the cabin seemed an ideal place to begin.

We arrived in Grafton with a feeling of relief and high expectations for the future. Ten days were spent cross-country skiing, trail blazing, exploring, reading , writing, chopping wood and general cabin maintainance. Just creating and executing a meal for 24 amid smoke and confusion was fulfilling. (Not to mention filling...)

However, along with this casual life style, unexpressed resentments developed. Finally we had a much needed meeting the night before our departure. It was, of course, necessary to air these resentments openly and honestly, but because of the lateness of the confrontation, an unresolved feeling was left.

In retrospect we feel this group division arose from differing levels of expectations. Some expected Outward Bound, others a less defined and specific goal. Our mistake was that in rejecting Outward Bound, we tried to replace it.

After the Grafton group initiation period the group separated to begin its individually designed programs. Students found jobs and homes generally in either rural or urban settings. Because of the nature of these experiences, each individual emerged with different evaluations. We therefore cannot generalize as to moods or situations. We leave the excerpts to convey what they will.

" I'm not saying things were peaches and cream the whole time. "

"...It is the type of job I could get anytime, and I consider Alternate Semester as a program to fulfill opportunities that may never be open to me again. "

" I am supposedly living in a bad area but it's very hard for me to be afraid, with all the nice people I've met up with and mean people I haven't. This is a mainly black area which made me nervous at first, but they've been perfectly nice to me. "

" Too much organization tends to limit thepotential outcome of experiences. This is probably what is threatening most parents- the supposed unorganization... it's too bad. "

" Vinoba (farm) was a favorite with me. It is impossible to pick out one unit from thesemester and say " this was the best ", because they were all so different. But this unit ranks pretty high, the work, the people, and the atmosphere were all so comfortable and peaceful that I felt as if I never wanted to leave. It was a very nice and secure place for all of us. We are going back soon."

" I enjoyed Regional while I was there, I took all the courses, etc. that I wanted but after three years I'd pulled all I wanted from that school. "

" I have learned how to improve my lifestyle to a happier, more peaceful existence. I feel capable of doing almost anything humanly possible if I set my mind to it. "

" I had never liked groups before, the idea of cliques and stuff. I still don't in some ways but I found that groups can give a security that is really comforting. "

" There is so much sadness here (the city). In Lincoln it was so easy to ignore - but not here. We are following a rape and robbery case this week, it is very interesting so far. I have found answers to many questions I had about law, courts, and the system in general. "

I had such a narrow mind I just did'nt realise or think there were other ways. "

" I realise after living here that I am not what you would call a city person, but there is alot of good to be found here. All the education, the mass transportation, different people and so much to see and do."

" You're not completely alone in any society, you have to learn to contribute and concede. The group projects makes this easier to see, for the effects of selfishness are immediatelyfelt."

" While the roles of Arnold and Ellen were 'in limbo' so to speak, not really defined I realized that I had equal responsibility to decide their position, and that in itself says something about

the programs freshness and complete room for originality."

" To talk about what your feelings, likes and dislikes are before the very end, that's something that I think everyone learned through Alternate Semester. "

" I felt much more relaxed in my relationships with other people and consequently understood them better and enjoyed being with them more."

" The farm was a really secure place. It gave me a chance to look objectively at my life to see what was wrong with it and what I wanted to change."

" Alternate Semester enables students to choose a direction in their experience and be supported during and after that decision."

" I consider myself alot smarter. "

" Our biggest conflict with Lowell (Rheinheimer) had to do with us being late for everything. It was partly due to his watch being fast..."

FINAL PROJECT

"Eight miles east of Inverness, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, lies Sight Point, a green-cowled, semi alpine headland rising abruptly to a height of 1110 feet above the angry grey seas of the Northumberland strait. Sight Point Camp is just at the eight mile mark, at the end of the serpentine stone and dirt track from Inverness. Three weathered, bright-shuttered camp buildings standhigh on the slope, surrounded by sheep meadows. All were built by the campers under the watchful eye of Jean Rosner, the director, who was kind enough to offer us the use of the huge main building as base camp for our final project. Ringed with window seats, the main building has a very large central room with a fireplace, a separate kitchen and a sleeping loft. Such a setting lent itself equally to hard work and to relaxation."*

It is hard for anyone to wrap up Sight Point-either in a sentence or in a report. But one thing that must be said is that we all had a great time. The surroundings were of rare beauty, as our specially written description* may have conveyed. The culture of two countries, Canada and Scotland, was in itself enough to make the trip worthwhile. Moreover, our group matured, functioning as a group. After a full day's work for a Scottish farmer, we would smoothly produce a feast-and clean up! Deceivingly simple, this example was a concrete result of a closeness and respect for one another. There were never defined roles-no appointed positions, therefore no hierarchical system to fall back on. During times of physical and emotional stress, the differing roles taken on by individuals were completely spontaneous. While one leader would emerge when extricat

*written by our own Arnold Bossi

ing a borrowed truck from three feet of mud, this same person would prove virtually useless in a kitchen, and vice-versa.

Respecting and honoring this spontaneity gave us an honest, (although not necessarily efficient) atmosphere. This was one of the most important single aspects of Sight Point, as well as the program in general.

SUMMARY

In summary, we feel this program was clearly beneficial and and worthwhile to all concerned.

Students, needless to say, gained an overwhelming amount of experience. Their lessons ranged from subtleties in dealing with people, to practical skills in agriculture, to helping City Hall tick. Taking into consideration the amount learned for the time spent, we can only call it a crash course on life.

Teachers as well as students gained. " We've at times been counsellors, teachers, friends, learners, public relations manager, and we've learned from all these roles. " " It is a marvelous, rewarding, extremely exciting program of which to be a part. "

The delicate relationship between parent-teacher, parent-school, and parent-child has had an extraordinary effect on the program, both in terms of individual and group experience. This year parents were perhaps themost neglected party directly involved in the program. Inspite of this, we feel theyhave learned from their children. "The best thing is when they go away and then come back, they seem to see the family with fresh eyes and we see them with fresh eyes."

Employers gained our enthusiastic, freelabor, with students often offering new perspectives on work and life. Bill Southworth (see report later in report), who employed close to ½ the group on his jointly owned farm (Vinobs Farm, Weare N.H.) states; " In closing I think back to the students that I was lucky enough to get to know a little and I am thankful for their friendship...They taught me a great deal about many things in general and about some things about myself. "

Our urban and rural hosts have our everlasting thanks, along with those lessons inevitably learned from living with high school students. More often than not, students and the individuals they stayed with became close friends..

The total school community is forced to reconsider the terms upon which they go to school. Equal credit as for those in school is offered for a student to develop his own curriculum. Therefore the student is no longer justified in the attitude, 'I'm in school only because I have no other alternative'. Achoice now exists .

It is important to understand the merit of having such a program at the high school level. The school system provides a place where collective information, such as is necessary for placement in jobs, homes, etc. can be stored. Alternate Semester provides the economic support imperative in a program of this nature. Without it, students must be confined to paying, not volunteer jobs, and this reality comes all too soon as it is. In order to find living accommodations in lower income brackets it is necessary to provide the families with financial compensation.

Alternate Semester provides necessary emotional backing. It replaces the security a school system provides with the stronger and stabler backing of a close group of students undergoing common experiences.

CONCLUSION

We can only conclude with the statement of one of our members:

" Who knows, you may want to do what I did. "

Lincoln-Sudury Regional High School Budget Worksheet

ALTERNATE SEMESTER PROGRAM

Budget No.	Category	1973-74 expenditures
2300311	*Salaries, Teaching	7,972
	substitutes	690
	extra duties	700
2300316	Travel, in state	776
	out of state	
3520316	Other expenses (student room and board)	
	Gross	7,095
	Less: Tuition plus fund raising	4,495
	Net	2,600
Total budgeted items		12,738

* If enrollment increases to 30 or more all costs will increase proportionately ($2,000 per five students).

ADVISOR EVALUATION

Combining the roles of Alternate Semester participant with Lincoln-Sudbury faculty member/Alternate Semester advisor creates inherent dilemas. Conflicts erupt between rebellious high school students and their threatened parents. The advisors are caught in a position of juggling responsibilities between child, parent and themselves.

Frequently, the frustsration of parents who feel threatened by their child's new sense of freedom turns to anger and it is directed at the persons they see as being responsible, the advisors. In most cases,it is not they who are responsible for the problem but the required flexible scheduling of the program. However, the advisors must listen to criticism of the program as well as themselves. They must sift valid complaints from emotional outbursts, then use their own sense of priorities to evaluate it's importance: Should it be brought up at the next meeting? Will it create more trouble than it is worth? These and endless other complex decisions must be made constantly, often under pressure from fast approaching deadlines. The outcome of all this can bring disappointment and often anger at the judgments of the advisors.

A major complaint from the student sect of the group was that Arnold and Ellen withheld too many

specifics, their sifting became overprotective, thus the story we heard too general. Our belief, while not denying the unique position of an advisor, was that all decisions should be made by the group and not by any one individual. We felt, therefore, that Ellen and Arnold took too much responsibility, leaving us in a relatively powerless position. Because of the lateness of group action, this was never completely resolved.

The role of advisor is one which demands sensitivity, patience and a deep dedication to the philosophy of the program. Ellen and Arnold filled this role as Alternate Semester paticipant and Lincoln-Sudbury faculty member/Alternate Semester advisor intelligently and competently. We all thank them very much.

ADVISOR REPORT: ARNOLD BOSSI

Perhaps the primary goal of Alternate Semester is that an individual grows both within himself and as part of a group. Without exception, in terms of their individual starting points, the students this year achieved this goal. For most, this meant an awakening feeling of self-confidence, of whom they were and even where they were going (or not going - an equally important discovery) with their lives. Having at one time or another to budget food money and keep accounts taught the beginnings of fiscal wisdom to many who seemed appalled at food prices and the general cost of living. Functioning in unaccustomed environments broadened a good many points of view which had previously been suburban and insular. For some, success was in part the acquisition of new concrete skills: surveying, carding and spinning wool, carpentry, nursing, law-clerking, lobstering, tractor driving, cooking and baking, to name a few. For others, success meant reading a good deal, investigating other religions and philosophies, or keeping a detailed journal of what they were doing and thinking. For all, the chance to meet new people with varied backgrounds and opinions provided a raft of insights into the world with which they shall have all too soon to cope.

The most difficult task and that which took the longest time to realize was a sense of group identity, something which did not gell at all until the end of the final project in Nova Scotia. A good deal of the reason for this was the nature of the fall term, the planning session, which this year became so mired in money making schemes and proposal writing, that not nearly enough time was left for becoming a group. It is obvi-

ous to me now, although it was not then, that the time to go away as a group is immediately in the fall, rather than wait until second semester as has been the case in the past. It need not even be for a long time, but it does need to be away from the school. Should a semblance of group identity be established early in the fall, then far more time can be spent visiting urban and rural sites as a group, which will in turn facilitate the transition from the planning to the off-campus semester.

I should like to add that when group unity finally did arrive, it was a very powerful thing indeed, and was keenly felt by everyone, just as the lack of it had been keenly felt before. It seemed to come on the heels of a very difficult meeting in which a good many gripes were voiced and a good many spleens vented. For reasons which remain obscure, the meeting was shortly followed by a literal olympiad in which the group competed in such events as pushups, thumb wrestling, arm wrestling, leg wrestling, jump rope, headstands, and, yes, even waltzing and squaredancing. Looking back, it was absurdly appropriate and appropriately absurd to be driven together in this way.

Several problems which involve the leadership of Alternate Semester are quite without solution, but should be mentioned in passing as points of information. First, the program requires an extraordinary investment of practical and emotional energy. Crises real and imaginary can and do crop up at all times of day and night, usually requiring instant attention. Thus, classes at times have to be cancelled at the last minute or personal plans shelved. The ideal solution is of course for two teachers to work the program full time, thereby avoiding the inevitable conflict between ones' formal classes and Alternate Semester.

To a taxpayer, however, two teachers allotted full time to twenty-two students might well smack of economic brinksmanship. The answer, if such it be, is for the leaders to be fully aware of how much they must expend, physically and emotionally, and to pace themselves accordingly.

Second, the ambiguity of the leaders' role will always be a problem. The students come to think of the directors as friends rather than directors, and when thr director emerges in support of a parent, an administrator, or a school policy, it is not uncommon for the students to become extraordinarily hostile and grumble about betrayal, lack of trust, failure to delegate responsibility, and over-authoritarianism. By the same token, parents sensing the leadership siding with their children, as must happen from time to time, express their resentment of this by harping on lack of leadership, lack of structure, and lack of sensitivity. Further, parents often seem to resent the fact that the leaders may know a good deal more about their children than they themselves do, and sense that they are not being told everything. In this, they sense correctly. There have been times this year when parents have not been told everything, just as there have been times when the students have not been told everything about a conversation with a parent. The leader is, then, privy to a good deal of information and must be the judge in the final analysis of what is to be disseminated and what is not. The line we walk is a delicate one, and one which often makes us feel unwanted, totally lacking in support, and lashed to the helm of a rapidly sinking ship.

I have learned, I think, that this most delicate line must be put in proper perspective. Most of the students are just at

a point in their lives when they are beginning to break away - from their homes, from their schools and from a munber of childhood institutions. It seems natural, therefore , that while in the throes of this iconoclastic period in theirlives, the student should turn upon all those whom they perceive to be obstructing their outward growth. Unfortunately, some parents, noting the phenomenon of their child leaving the roost, are wont to attach the blame for this on the program and its leaders, rather than viewing it as a normal "rite de passage." So, we are caught. We are betwixt and between, more often than not damned if we do and damned if we don't. The only consolation is the knowledge, or the certainty, that much adverse criticism arises from quite forseeable circumstances, and should be dealt with as such, while managing to keep ones own emotional composure intact.

An Alternate Semester New Years Resolution List:

1. Continue to have two people share the leadership equally. This works well.
2. Involve the parents right from the beginning, perhaps as early as the summer, and keep them better informed during the fall.
3. Go away in the fall as a group, as quickly as possible.
4. Be very explicit as to what will be expected in writing from the students.
5. Do away with the 5 week meetings in the spring unless they are specifically requested.
6. Continue to let students do their own food budgeting where possible.
7. Encourage small group situations (Southworth's, Fannings, Jamie Lasell's and the like).

8. Have a very clear picture of the budget from the start.
9. Discourage students from living at home and seeking routinous paying jobs.
10. Help students to clarify in their own minds the goals which they have set themselves.

I don't for a moment wish to imply that Alternate Semester is all drudgery and disillusionment. Far from it. With the above caveats in mind, it is a marvelous, rewarding extremely exciting program of which to be a part. Without exception, I have enormous regard for this years' group and find myself amazed and gratified that from the ash and rubble of the fall, such a splendid Phoenix could have arisen. Most parents have been very patient and helpful, coming to our rescue in the nick of time with food, housing and transportation. This year we have been fortunate in making many new friends in both urban and rural communities which will give us a real leg up next year. Finally, we have done so well on the budget this year, that Dave Levington has assured us the program will be able to continue. As long as there are students there will be Alternate Semester. We have arrived.

For those of us now connected with the program and those yet to come, I would like to offer in closing the following 15th century inscription found in Winchester Cathedral:

Give me a good digestion, Lord,
And also something to digest.
Give me a healthy body, Lord,
With sense to keep it at its best.
Give me a healthy mind, good Lord,
To keep the good and pure in sight,
Which seeing sin is not appalled
But finds a way to put it right.
Give me a mind that is not bored
That does not whimper, whine or sigh.
Do not let me worry over much
About that fuzzy thing called "I."

Give me a sense of humor, Lord.
Give me the grace to see a joke;
To get some happiness from life
And pass it on to other folk.

ADVISOR REPORT: ELLEN GLANZ

Alternate Semester is, for those who coordinate it, a program of extremes: both intensely rewarding and excruciatingly draining. It provides both an opportunity to see students mature more fully than any classroom teaching allows, and a chance to interact with students as people apart from student/teacher roles; it is at the same time a source of frustration, tension, and an overwhelming mountain of responsibility.

In thinking back over the year, I feel strongly that the program was an invaluable experience for all the students who participated. Perhaps Alternate Semester of some related program should be required of all students at some time during their high school career, for the contrast between students in the program and those in my regular classes at the school was blatant. While those in school seemed largely bored, restless, and motivated not by real interest in what they were learning but rather by pressure from parents, college admissions, and anxiety about the future, the Alternate Semester students were excited by what they were learning, the people they were meeting, and the life styles they were trying out, and many were beginning to find some direction for their lives.

It seems to me that high school is a time for testing oneself, of measuring on's competence and strengths in a range of situations and with a variety of people. It is a time of questioning, of opening up, of figuring out what's important and where one fits in the world. The fact that so many possibilities exist, and that the individual feels that success or failure is completely within his or her own hands, is a source of both awe

and tension to most students. They need time to try out different ideas and to measure themselves in a variety of situations outside the four walls of the school building.

Alternate Semester provides this opportunity. Perhaps the two most important features of the program are that students structure and plan it themselves, and that they are given the chance to live away from home and to try out different living and work situations with the support and help of the coordinators when they need it. In a sense, it is a half-way step toward being completely on their own. The students are given a great deal of flexibility and responsibility, but the coordinators maintain close contact and are there to iron out problems or suggest alternatives if difficulties arise.

For me, the results of the program were gratifying: not only were students excited about what they were doing, but over the year they matured tremendously: they have more confidence in themselves, seem comfortable in a range of new environments, have learned a variety of skills, and bring more of a purpose to their lives - they know better what they want and don't want for themselves, and are beginning to know why they're doing what they do. As a group, they become more assertive and less passive: they wanted to have control over their lives and were beginning to take on the responsibility and decision-making power that is part of being an autonomous adult.

For Arnie and me, it was tremendously exciting and satisfying to see students change and grow. We've learned much about administering alternative programs, working with students and their parents, creating environments in which students can comfortably plan, and knowing when to give responsibility and freedom and

when to set limits or give support. We've at times been counselors, teachers, friends, learners and public relations managers, and we've learned from all these roles. I've ran into a number of problems and worked out many issues as the year progressed, and though it was frustrating at times, we both feel good enough about what we did and what we learned to want to coordinate the program again next year.

Arnie and I were both new to Alternate Semester this year. We came into the program with the notion that this was to be an alternative to high school. We wanted to help the students decide on a format, but we felt strongly that the program was essentially <u>theirs</u>. Within certain limits of budget and constructiveness, we wanted them to explore possibilities and to design a program that would allow them collectively and individually to do what they wanted to do. We did not want them necessarily to follow the model of previous years, and we wanted them to work together and come up with something that would both meet their own needs and take into account the wishes of others.

This emphasis on student planning and self-direction is important to both of us and remains the central thrust of the programs. Yet it was also a source of frustration in the fall: students had trouble planning when they had only a vague notion of what possibilities existed, how much money they had to work with, and when they did not feel comfortable with each other as a group. Motivation was low because the spring seemed far off and the notion of being actually out of school unreal. The classroom we used and the time of day we met were largely unconducive to either planning an alternative program or fostering

group identity. It was difficult to work enthusiastically to earn money when there was no clearcut sense of what it was for or how much was needed, and we spent too much time talking about raising money and not enough on shaping the program or actually earning the money.

A further unfortunate complication was the time and energy Arnie and I wasted on writing a funding proposal for metro money. We worked an incredible number of hours on something that should have been done by professionals, and it diverted our energy from planning and spending time with the students. Worse, it kept us suspended until January as to whether or not we'd be working with an urban school in the spring, whether we were planning for twenty-five students or fifty, and how much money we had to work with.

Next year, we intend to go away as a group early in the fall. We'd like to spend two weeks on a rural outing and one week on an urban initiation, so that students can get some idea of possibilities for the spring. We expect that these trips, coupled with weekend excursions, nimbus-type group initiative projects and group-encounter games, will help the students feel more at ease with each other and with us. We also hope that we'll have a clearer idea of our budget from Dave Levington and the school committee, so that we can plan more realistically in the fall. Finally, we'd like to improve our relationships with parents. Though we were diligent in the spring about telephoning parents to report how their children were doing, we tended to forget in the fall that communication between high school students and their parents is not always what it should be. As a result, we did not realize that many parents had no idea of

what the program was about. Next year, we intend to meet with the parents early in the fall to explain the goals and format of Alternate Semester and to enlist their cooperation and involvement throughout the planning phase. We also think that it would be a good idea to decide early next year on who will be supervising the program the year after next. This person could work with us on at least a part-time basis next year, so that (s)he'll know what (s)he's doing when (s)he starts in the fall '75. (Another possibility is to have either Arnie or me supervise the program a third year, thereby staggering the introduction of new teachers).

Given this fall complement of problems, it is really a tribute to the students involved that the semester came off as well as it did. With only several exceptions, students felt that each of their working and living situations were rewarding, stimulating and fun. We envolved a fairly flexible schedule where each student could decide how long (s)he wanted to stay in each place, though most projects lasted about five weeks. Most students balanced their time between urban and rural settings, though a few stated the entire semester in the city, country, or suburbs (see enclosed flow chart). We also had a balance of individual, small group (5-8 student) and large group projects from which students could chose, and this also worked out well. Though this added flexibility in duration and type of project created a somewhat more difficult (and hectic) task for the administrators, we feel it was well worth the added effort.

A final note on our supervision: it is a rather thankless task. We often found ourselves caught in the middle, acting as buffers between parents and their children. Growing up and away

from home is never easy, and we were sometimes the focus of frustrations that were far beyond our control. We also found it necessary to present different sides of ourselves to parents, school administrators, and students, and each group was angered when they perceived a different side. To students, we were largely friends, support, and "just people"; they tended to take offense when we imposed requirements or limits on them. Parents and school officials were often frustrated when we didn't take a more teacherly, "stronger stand." As coordinators of this program, we are privy to much information, and we have to use our own judgement about what to disclose and how to act. Parents simply must trust that we know what we're doing. Our position is one of incredible responsibility; students (and sometimes parents) call at all hours of the day, and supervision becomes a rather allengulfing undertaking, much more than a job. However, it is this same all-involvement which makes the task so rewarding and fulfilling. Though there were times when I wanted to give up the whole project, I have found this program to be one of the most satisfying undertakings in my teaching career: I have become close to numerous students, and I have seen tremendous changes within some of them. I am extremely happy that I had the chance to supervise the program this year, and I look forward to coordinating it again next year.

REPORT TO THE LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL'S ALTERNATE SEMESTER PROGRAM

William A. Southworth

Educational and Environmental Psychologist-MIT

Frustrated Farmer-Currier Brook Farm

We began our involvement with ASP by asking to participate, a switch from normal procedure, simply because we believed in what the program was attempting to do and we felt that we could help. We have believed for a long time that living experiences outside the classroom could be significant for the educational and personal growth of high school students and we are even more convinced of that belief now. However, our involvement was not without its frustrations as well and we were left to puzzle over a number of issues. I'd like to share my thoughts and feelings about the program with the hope that they might help to clarify some issues for all of us.

I saw the program initially as an opportunity for a mutually beneficial arrangement in which we might be able to provide some rural experiences, partly in the old tradition of 19th century New England that our neighbors the Rheinheimers (Lowell and Edie) were trying to live and partly in the new "tradition" which took advantage of aspects of modern technology and ideas, while at the same time hoping to learn more about where high school students were in their thinking about life and the education that supposedly was preparing them for that life. In addition, we were looking for some help from the students that would bring us a little closer to our plans to move to the farm and start a school. In a very big way our school began with our involvement in this program. Our reeducation about teenagers began at the same time, as we were to learn later in the program.

I tried in the weeks before the program began to explain to the students what we were trying to do, how we wished to live, and what we had planned for the fifteen weeks. We were able to accomplish a number of the tasks that we

had outlined and today one can see the physical results of the students' efforts-sheathing on the ell of the house, crawl spaces dug under future floors, an outhouse with a view, a trimmed and cleared orchard, salvaged lumber for future projects, crumbling walls removed for a new beginning, floors patched, a large garden planted. These were tangible examples of progress which delighted us no end and for which we are ever grateful.

But there were also the frustrations, some of which were instructive to us and helped us and our ideas to grow and some which continue to puzzle us. I learned to be more patient and more accepting of "rural time" with the help of the students, a lesson that I wanted them to learn but which they taught to me instead. But time continued to be a frustrating factor. We could only come up on weekends so that just when we got started it was time to return to our other life down in the city. This left us with little time to reflect on what had happened the previous day and it left us little time to put this experience into some kind of educational perspective. I wanted to use the work experiences as bases for ideas and principles that are usually covered in the classroom, a form of learning by doing. But we were so busy "doing" that I was not certain if we were learning. Here was an opportunity to really try out ideas that I had expounded to others for years and yet it didn't work out quite the way I had hoped. This wasn't all bad, however, because I began to realise that there was much more to learn than certain principles of physics or geometry. I realised that students were learning to live with their peers in ways they had not experienced before in most cases. They were learning how to deal with problems and responsibilities of living, such as budgeting their money, planning their meals, negotiating their working conditions. They were also learning the satisfaction that came from doing a project on their own, an opportunity that arose too seldom in the midst of plans that we had made for doing things and how to do them. I saw that we needed to provide more projects that students could plan themselves and take to completion. They did

this in the case of the sauna that they planned and built. The sauna was more than just a place to soothe their aching muscles at the end of the day. It was an opportunity to demonstrate to themselves that they could plan and execute an idea which made sense to them and which could leave them with a solid feeling of accomplishment. I was certain after seeing the expressions on their faces and hearing the enthusiasm in their voices when they talked about the sauna that somehow we needed to devise a way to give them projects of their own that they could take from start to finish while accomplishing goals that had been established by us. That's not an easy task, particularly when you have very set ideas of what should be done and how well it should be done. I guess that's where patience comes in, along with a realization that if you have invited people to help you accomplish goals that they will want to have a voice in how those goals are to be reached. One is tempted to espouse the idea of teenagers being mature enough to perform most "adult" tasks and yet back down from that idea when it comes time to perform the task, particularly when it has a finality to it and you realize that you will have to live with the results, or live in the results as it happened with us when we were working on the house.

We discussed another issue that also involved time. I felt that five weeks was too short a time for the students to get a real taste of what the rural life had to offer, particularly as it was lived by Lowell and Edie. The students had wanted to have a variety of experiences to choose from during the fifteen week period and I could sympathize with that idea. After all, that was one of the goals of the program. However, I still feel that a more total immersion for a longer period of time would have been very beneficial for some students, both from the standpoint of what they learned about skills and about themselves. I would recommend such an alternative be included in the program next year.

In line with the above suggestion I would also like to see Lincoln-Sudbury expand the concept of their program so that a student could substitute

the traditional classroom methods of learning certain subject matter for a longer ASP type of experience, extending the time to a year or longer. At the present time no one is going too far out on a limb. I think that if the concept of ASP as an educational experience is believed in firmly enough and there is enough evidence to show that a student could substitute ASP for the traditional method of learning, then Lincoln-Sudbury ought to think seriously about moving in that direction.

Another frustration that I felt as a participant in the program was due to the lack of adequate opportunity for the students to discuss things they had learned, questions that had been raised in their minds, ideas that they had been working on, plans they had made. When I refer to opportunity I am referring to people who take time out periodically with a group of the students and hear them out about a wide range of topics or to raise issues and questions for them to think about, all the time drawing on aspects of the program that have sparked the questioning or issues in the first place. We had a good session the last weekend the students were at the farm and I can remember one good long discussion that I had with the first group about their plans for the future, particularly with regard to their going on to college. I imagine that there were many other good discussions that I was unaware of, but I felt that there was need for more. Much as I dislike institutionalizing so many things I believe that the program should give serious consideration to a formal commitment for holding frequent discussions about educational issues and personal growth issues. This commitment could be shared by the program staff and the job supervisors when appropriate. I am aware that many excellent discussions begin in informal "bull sessions" and I would imagine that they would still continue. I am also aware, however, that staff, job supervisors, and teachers can raise many critical issues for discussion, picking up on some experiences in the program and at times challenging ideas or impressions held by the students.

I raise this point here and suggest that it be stressed in the program next year because I have used the technique very successfully in a number of instances and it proved to be a valuable part of each of the programs or classes in which it occurred.

There are so many other things to talk about because the program was very rich but I have to bring this to a close. In closing I think back to the students that I was lucky enough to get to know a little and I am thankful for their friendship. I'm pleased that our paths had a chance to cross and I hope they will cross frequently. They taught me a great deal about many things in general and about some things about myself. I am also appreciative for the way they put their heads, their hearts, and their backs into the work that we had to do. Jane and I can never really thank them enough.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Steve Ackerman

Anne Amesbury

Beth Brown

Laurie Burroughs

Tom Carley

Malcolm Carley

Cathy Casner

Mark Collins

Hilary French

Ann Gardiner

Jack Gillig

José Giner

Audrey Kessel

Julia Linnell

Sarah Marx

Buffer Morgan

Tad Nunez

Charlotte Richardson

Amy Richardson

Sarah Stanley

Karen Swanson

Kathy Zaunseil

GRAFTON, VERMONT — Ten Day Group Initiation Project

week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5	week 6
Jan 28 – Feb 2	Feb 3	Feb 9	Feb 10	Feb 16	Feb 17	Feb 23	Feb 24	Mar 2	Mar 3	Mar 9

WORK: BOSTON CITY HOSPITAL

LIVING: Bill Satterthwaite 2 Claremont St
WORK: BOSTON BALLET and CHILDREN'S

LIVING: Scott's Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: Spear Educational Center, Inc. (WORKING WITH Autistic Children)

LIVING: George Fanning 2 Otis Pl. Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: Spear Educational Center, Inc. (WORKING WITH AUTISTIC CHILDREN)

LIVING: George Fanning 2 Otis Pl. Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: CONSUMER PROTECTION DIV, ATTO

LIVING: Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: Pollution Project. BOSTON ENVIRONMENT INC. IN STATE HOUSE.

LIVING: George Fanning 2 Otis Pl. Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: FARMING. Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

Living: Jean Wireman South Weare, N. H.
WORK: BOSTON CITY HOSPITAL

Living: Goodrich's South End, BOSTON
WORK: FARMING. Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

Living: Jean Wireman South Weare, N. H.
WORK: FARMING. Bill Southworth's & Vinoba farm

LIVING: Jean Wireman South Weare, N.H.
WORK: Ran Ski Club.

Living: Morrisville Ski Club Morrisville, Vermont
WORK: massachusetts college of Art & Scienc

Living: George Fanning 2 Otis Pl. Beacon Hill, B
WORK: Spear Educational Center Inc. (WORKING with AUTISTIC children) / Mattapan / Disease H

LIVING: George Fanning 2 Otis Pl. Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: Farming. Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

LIVING: Jean Wireman South Weare, N. H.
WORK: DRUMLIN FARM / Course at N.E. Co

LIVING: Sudbury, Massachusetts
WORK: WORKED ON ABC HUTS.

LIVING: Pinkham Notch, Mt. Washington, New Hampshire
WORK: FARMING Bill Southworth's, Vinoba Farm Hersey's Farm.

LIVING: Jean Wireman South Weare, N. H.
WORK: Mind Control Course BOSTON CENTER FOR OLDER

LIVING: Lincoln, Ma. DeMarco's South End,
WORK: DOCTOR ASSISTANT →

LIVING: Dr. Putnam Lyme, New Hampshire
WORK: Pollution Project BOSTON ENVIRONMENT, IN STATE HOUSE. INC

LIVING: George Fanning 2 Otis Pl. Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: N.E. School of Photography & Mattapan Cl Disease Hos

LIVING: Annenberg's Beacon Hill, BOSTON
WORK: FARMING: Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

FARMING: Jean Wireman So. Weare, N.H.

week 7	week 8	week 9	week 10	week 11	week 12	week 13	week 14	week 15	week 16	week 17	week 18
Mar 16 Mar 17	Mar 23 Mar 24	Mar 30 Mar 31	Apr 6 Apr 7	Apr 13 Apr 14	Apr 20 Apr 21	Apr 27 Apr 28	May 4 May 5	May 11 May 12	May 18 May 19	May 25 May 26	June 1

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CAPE BRETON ISLAND, NOVA SCOTIA

FINAL GROUP PROJECT

OGRAPHY, READING, WRITING

eat South End, BOSTON HOSPITAL

actory Job. & Court OBSERVATION in BOSTON Courtrooms.

arbie Tucker, South End, BOSTON actory Job & court OBSERVATION in BOSTON courtrooms.

arbie Tucker. South End, BOSTON URY GENERAL'S OFFICE

LOBSTERING

Petit manan, Maine FARMING: Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm.

Jean Wireman So. Weare, N.H. Lived with Retired Lobsterman

Lester Tate Grand Manan Isle, New Brunswick, CANADA FARMING

Cooper, Kentucky

arming. Southworths & Vinoba Farm

an Wireman South Weare, New Hampshire ssistant teacher. Bancroft School, Copley Sq.

ack Powers Beacon Hill, BOSTON actory Job at Digital Maynard orked on Family's house painting.

Sudbury, Massachusetts entennial Commission & court OBSERVATION in Boston courtrooms

Martilla's South End, BOSTON ssistant Teacher. Bancroft School, Copley Sq.

allas's Beacon Hill BOSTON Camping

New Hampshire ology

BOSTON Chronic spital

Martilla's South End, BOSTON ssistant Teacher in ancroft School.

ack owers Beacon Hill USERVATORY

Worked in B.M.C. Hut

Pinkham Notch, Vermont Farming. Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

Jean Wireman So. Weare, N.H. Assistant teacher. Bancroft School, Copley Square

Franklin Park Childrens Zoo

Dean's Dorchester of Music/Deaconess Hospital

COMMUNAL FARMING

Hill House Farm Charlemont, Massachusetts COMMUNAL FARMING

Hill House Farm Charlemont, Massachusetts

District Attorney's OFFICE Atty. Michael DeMarco

GOODRICH'S South End, BOSTON

Boat Building & Carpentry THE Apprentice Shop

Bath, Maine Worked in AMC Hut.

Pinkham Notch, Vermont Driving Range

Sudbury, Massachusetts COMMUNAL FARMING

Hill House Farm CHARLEMONT, MASSACHUSETTS FARMING

Hidden Spring Community South Ackworth, New Hampshire FARMING

Hidden Spring Community South Ackworth, New Hampshire

Farming. Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

Jean Wireman South Weare, New Hampshire Assistant Teacher at Carroll School

Sudbury, Mass

AMERICANS

Assistant Teacher at Bancroft School

Dallas's Beacon Hill

FARMING.

Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Canada FARMING: Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

Jean Wireman South Weare, New Hampshire

OSTON FARMING. Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm.

Jean Wireman South Weare, New Hampshire rich Lindemann Mental Health Center

DeMarco's South End, BOSTON ronic spital

FARMING: Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

Jean Wireman So. Weare, N.H. WORKED IN AMC. HUT.

Pinkham Notch, Vermont

FARMING: Bill Southworth's & Vinoba Farm

Jean Wireman South Weare, N.H. FARMING: Lewis King's Dairy Farm

King's New Braintree, Massachusetts FARMING: Lewis King's Dairy Farm

King's New Braintree, Massachusetts

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